

DIME NOVEL ROUND-UP

A monthly magazine devoted to the collecting, preservation and literature of the old-time dime and nickel novels, libraries and popular story papers.

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PLUCK AND LUCK 118

by Harold C. Holmes

When I wrote up for you in Round-Up for Nov. 1942 #122 the story of Doughty in NY Det. Lib. 171, I chose that issue to show that his skill was equal to writing a story from almost no plot, with no violence, nothing of the weird or mysterious about it. I have chosen this issue of Pluck and Luck for just the opposite reason. To show that when Doughty chose to write of the weird, the mysterious, he sure could "give it the business." As to plot, yes, this time he chose one. The oldest plot known to literature I guess, wore out to shabbiness by its use by every author of a detective tale who ever put pen to paper. Must have been used a thousand times in dime novels alone. Here it is: hero, heir to a fortune, if he were dead fortune would go to a relative. Said relative plots the hero's death. Doughty takes that ancient and honorable plot and writes a swell tale around it.

#118 was titled *The Scarlet Shroud*; or, *The Fate of the Five*. Dated Sep. 5, 1900. This was not the first Doughty tale in Pluck and Luck but was among the early ones he wrote for that publication. The "pen name" assigned to this issue was Howard Austin. This issue was reprinted in full in #926 dated Mar. 1, 1916 and was again reprinted slightly abridged in #1595 dated Dec. 19, 1928. These reprints had reprints of the original picture cover though less color was used and they poorly show the charm of the original picture.

This picture was a dandy. Shows the inside of a dissecting room in a

medical school. In background two corpse wrapped in white shrouds lie stretched out on marble slabs. In foreground another slab on which lies a body in a scarlet shroud. Four students stand around this body, registering utmost horror as one of them has partly removed the shroud, disclosing the face of their dead comrade, Jim McKee.

Chap. 1. The Man in Black

"He is dead, my friends, dead in the very flower of his youth, he has passed into everlasting peace and rest" and the Rev. Mr. Ordway knelt beside the coffin in prayer.

Harry Henshaw and Jim McKee wept unashamed. William Howe only 21 years old had been a classmate of theirs in Sanford Medical College, in New York City and now he lay dead. At close of the rites they stepped to side of the room to speak to Joe Baker who roomed at the same house as they did. Joe was assistant to the undertaker who had charge of the funeral. They exchanged a few words when Joe suddenly said, "Look the Man in Black."

They turned and looked toward the coffin where a line of people were slowly passing to pay their last respects to the remains. There was a Man in Black, tall with closely clipped grey hair, with black piercing eyes. This man looked at the face of the dead and then bending down for an instant seemed to be trying to see into the coffin under the closed lower lid, then the man passed on.

Joe Baker said that he had seen that man at every funeral his boss had conducted that year. The man

always conducted himself in the same manner, speaking to no one and yet always going to the cemetery with the others. Joe thought he must be a fanatic who got a morbid pleasure out of attending funerals.

And indeed Harry Henshaw saw The Man in Black at the grave standing apart from the others but after the ceremonies had come to a close and Harry looked again the man had disappeared.

Chap. 2. S. S. No. 23

Just six months later it was Russell McKee, the younger brother of Jim McKee who brought the sad intelligence to Harry Henshaw. Yes, his friend and classmate Jim McKee was no more. Had sustained a fatal injury in a fall from a horse he was riding.

The members of Jim's class attended the funeral at the McKee home in Jersey City. Harry Henshaw again saw the mysterious Man in Black who as before after he had gazed at the face of the remains, stooped down and appeared to look for an instant into the lower part of the casket.

Harry felt a real aversion for this man so he was far from pleased when the time came to ride to the cemetery and he found as his sole carriage mate this dismal looking figure. They sat in silence the whole of the long and tiresome journey to the New York Bay Cemetery at Greenville, N. J.

Only when they stepped from the carriage was the silence broken when the Man in Black asked if the body was to be buried. Harry replied that it was not, that it was to be put in a receiving vault. Harry resolved then and there that he would follow this man wherever he went after the ceremony and try and get some light on his mysterious actions.

Just before the rites were concluded the Man in Black started off, not towards the entrance but deeper into the ceremony. It had turned cold, snow was beginning to fall and it was fast becoming dark as Harry followed on after the man. The man made no effort to go silently and when they came to the unused part of the cemetery, he went noisily thru the bushes so that it was easy for Harry to keep track of him. Soon appeared a little hut and the man walked up to this and disappeared inside the doorway.

Harry hid in the shrubbery and watched till he was nearly frozen but still the man did not re-appear.

At last Harry went to the door, knocked but no answer so he pushed his way in. No one was there for a good reason, there was another doorway on the opposite side of the room and the Man in Black had simply walked in one door and out the other and was definitely lost to Harry.

Harry looked around the room and saw picks, shovels, barrows, etc., all the implements for digging graves and on the wall hung a slate and freshly written upon it in red chalk was the following; "S. S. No. 23."

Chap. 3. A Horrible Discovery

Harry made his way out of the cemetery and got a train from the Greenville station back to New York. The storm increased in severity and the next day a regular blizzard was on.

The evening of the day after Jim McKee's funeral found four of the students in the dissecting room of the school where they had met to do some dissecting as required by their studies. Harry Henshaw remarked that they had a new subject to work on and said; "Pull off the sheet and we'll get to work;"

One of the boys pulled down the sheet and a cry of horror went up from all four. The white still face exposed was that of their friend, Jim McKee.

Chap. 4. The Meeting of the Five

August Zeckendorf's saloon was on a street running off from Hudson above Canal St. and the bartender stepping to the door to brush the snow off a sign that stated that "Hot Tom and Jerry" could be purchased inside was nearly upset by an intoxicated man who brushed by him into the saloon.

This man wore clothes of most expensive material but now torn and bedraggled. He called for whiskey and put down one drink, then he told the bartender that he had been steaming it up for three days and nights and was most dead for sleep, and pulling out a five dollar bill said he would give that for a place to sleep a few hours as he hoped then that he could pull himself together.

The bartender said that it was now 5:00 PM and he went off duty at 8:00

PM so he could have three hours sleep but must leave when the night man came on duty. So he led the man into a back room containing a table and several chairs and a line of whiskey barrels along one wall, between the barrels and the wall was an old settee and the drunk threw himself on this and dropped into a deep sleep.

When the night man came on at 8:00 PM the day bartender had completely forgotten about the sleeping man on the settee and went home with no one left in the saloon aware of the drunk's presence. About 1:00 AM this man awoke with a terrific hang-over but the sleep had cleared his mind somewhat. He heard voices in the room with him and peering between the barrels saw five men seated around the table.

One was the saloon-keeper, the estimable August Zeckendorf, himself, another was the man we have met, the Man in Black, the others looked like undertakers as indeed they were. Our drunk was looking in on a meeting of bodysnatchers, who supplied the different medical schools with their subjects.

Our drunk listened till he knew all about the way they conducted their business, then he stepped out from behind the barrels. The startled five yelled; "A spy" but they quickly subsided when our drunk pulled out a heavy revolver and covered them. He told them he had indeed heard every word they had said and was going to make a proposition to them:

"On the day a certain young man, now living in this city, becomes a subject for your interesting trade, there will be ten thousand dollars to divide among you. Refuse and I will go out that door and expose you to the police, if it costs me my life."

Chap. 5. A Strange Resurrection

Seeing the dead body of their former classmate Jim McKee on the dissecting-room slab was a terrible shock to the students.

(NOTE: My dictionary says a shroud is a winding sheet or covering for the dead. This is the common acceptance for the word I think and at least is the one used by the artist in his drawing of the picture. It does not conform to the text. In the picture the body is naked and covered with a crimson sheet, in the text, I Quote.

It was dressed in the grave clothes worn in the coffin. About the upper portion of the body was that anomalous object, a half coat without a back, with a shirt bosom in front, known to the undertaking fraternity as a shroud." End of Quote and of NOTE.)

The boys felt sure that Gordon the curator of the College must have guilty knowledge of how the body got in their dissecting room but when they looked for this man he was among the missing.

As the boys looked directly down on the shroud it appeared jet black in color but Harry Henshaw happened to bend down near the corpse where he saw the shroud at an angle and then it appeared to be of a scarlet color. When Harry saw this color he thought of what he had seen written on the slate in the hut of the grave-diggers in the cemetery. S. S. that stood for "scarlet shroud" and No. 23 was the No. of the receiving vault into which they had put Jim McKee's body.

The boys decided to go to Prof. Ruggles in a body and tell what had happened. First Harry went to reverently cover the face of the corpse with a handkerchief he took from his pocket. As he did this his hand brushed the cheek of the dead. He snatched his hand away and gave a great cry. He had felt warmth in that cheek. The other boys soon confirmed this. There was a chance Jim McKee still lived.

A bottle of brandy was in a closet and a little of this was poured into the mouth then Harry prepared for the critical test, opening a vein in the arm, if blood did not flow, then life was extinct. Harry plunged a lancet into a vein in Jim's arm and the red blood trickled down the arm. There was a sigh, a groan and suddenly with no warning movement, the supposed corpse of Jim McKee rose to a sitting posture on the dissecting-room table and opened its eyes.

Chap. 6. Harry Henshaw Smokes a Cigarette

Notwithstanding that the action of the bodysnatchers had resulted in the saving of Jim McKee's life the boys were determined to break up this vile gang and the night following Jim McKee's resuscitation the boys were to

meet in Harry Henshaw's room to plan their course of action.

As Harry sat waiting for them to come a visitor for him was announced. Harry was utterly astounded as the Man in Black walked into his room. The man sat down and told Harry his name was Narbone. Said that he had heard that his friend's body had been stolen from the cemetery vault and had later revived in the dissecting room of the medical school.

Harry asked him why he was interested and he said it was the interest of any man in hoping that so vile a crime as grave-robbing should be punished. He then asked Harry if he knew whether the McKee family was going to push the investigation or not.

"By the way, do you smoke?" asked the Man in Black pulling a package of cigarettes out of his pocket, handing one to Harry and taking one himself. Harry was glad of this as it offered an excuse to chat longer with this mysterious man and he wished to keep him there until the boys he was expecting, arrived.

At almost the first puff on the cigarette, Harry felt a most peculiar sensation take hold of him, all aversion to the Man in Black vanished, as he smoked on these sensations increased but the fascination of the feeling was such he could not throw the cigarette aside. His brain had fallen into a state of half imbecile placidity.

Soon there was a sound of many feet coming up the stairs. The Man in Black heard it also and springing up made a few passes over Harry's head.

"Follow me," said the man and Harry was powerless to resist. They passed into the adjoining room and the man shut and locked the door. Then the man opened the window looking onto the roof of the piazza. The man stepped out onto this roof and looking straight into Harry Henshaw's eyes commanded Harry to follow him. Unable to resist Harry stepped out of the window. All the time he could hear the voices of his friends in the other room, calling his name.

Moving backwards over the roof the man kept his eyes fixed on Harry's they kept on till they came to the first window in the adjoining house. This window the Man in Black raised and he and Harry entered.

Chap. 7. An Infamous Compact

We will turn back a moment to the scene in the room behind August Zeckendorf's saloon.

After the strange proposition made by the man whose revolver held the five men motionless, it was no wonder that for some moments no one spoke. Finally the Man in Black spoke up and said that it was not well in a matter of this kind for too many to know the details of the plan and if the others would withdraw he would discuss the details with the stranger and if it seemed feasible he would undertake the task himself.

The four men withdrew to the saloon and the stranger and the Man in Black sat down to discuss the details of the plot. Over an hour later five men left by a side door. On the street the Man in Black and the stranger left the others and arm in arm plowed thru the snow in direction of Hudson St.

The pair turned into Charles St. and came to a halt in front of the house in which Harry Henshaw roomed. This is the house said the stranger. "What is the young Man's name" asked the Man in Black. "Henry Henshaw" replied the stranger.

The Man in Black said to notice that the house next to the one in which lived Harry Henshaw was vacant, this would assist him, next to that house and on the corner was an undertaker's shop. Next to that and on the other street was a small hotel the J— House. "This is Wednesday. On Thursday morning Harry Henshaw will be found dead in his bed in one of the rooms of the J— House unless all my calculations go astray."

Chap. 8. Following the Footprints

"Harry, Oh Harry, where are you?" shouted Bill Blake one of the students who had called to see Harry Henshaw, and he pounded on the door leading from the sitting-room behind which he had heard sounds of someone moving around. No answer and the boys becoming alarmed called the landlady and with her master key she opened this door but of course by this time Harry and the Man in Black had left it.

They opened the window and in the snow could plainly see the two sets of prints and to their utmost astonishment could see that one per-

son had been walking forward and the other backwards. They followed the trail which as we know led in the window of the vacant house. Here they shouted loudly for Harry but with no results. They traced the footprints in the dust on the floor down the stairs to a door leading out into the back area. Here the trail ended and also another mystery. The back door was bolted on the inside.

Chap. 9. Drugged

Harry realized just what he was doing all the time he was following out the orders of the Man in Black but was powerless to resist. The influence of the drug he had inhaled in the cigarette was far too powerful. Harry had been led down these back stairs out the door, into a little shed. A board in the side of the shed moved aside and the two passed into the next yard and the board was then moved back into place. They entered the back door of the building and Harry knew he was in the backroom of the undertaker's shop on the corner, the same one that his friend Joe Baker worked in.

Now the Man in Black looked long and steadily into Harry's eyes and then said, "Go around the corner to the J— House. Sign your name to the register and ask for the room which was engaged for you this morning. You will pay them one dollar—here it is. Go to your room and go to bed. I command you to obey."

Harry walked out into the street without hesitation and carried out these orders completely and soon was in the J— House, was shown to Room 69 which he entered and fully clothed as he was, threw himself on the bed and instantly fell into a deep sleep.

Chap. 10. Room No. 69

While Harry Henshaw slept in Room 69 in the J— House his student friends and some of the roomers sat in Harry's sitting room and discussed what was best to do. In order that they might discuss the better, they applied themselves to Harry's slender stock of wine and made a big hole in his only box of cigars.

After they had thus disposed of an hour plus the wine and cigars the students all went to the Charles Street Police station and talked to a very little impressed sergeant on the desk. He said that they hadn't seen this

missing man since noon, hence he had plenty of time to get boozed up and no doubt was out on a little racket for himself and would show up alright by morning.

On the way back to the rooming house they stopped in at several saloons and by the time they arrived at the house several of the students were slightly hilarious and the landlady wisely refused to let them in. With that most of the students left and proceeded to go on a little racket of their own.

Notso Bill Blake and Sam Perry. They were far too worried. Sam said he knew of a little hotel around the corner called the J— House and proposed putting up there for the night and continuing their investigation early the next morning. It was decided thus and a few minutes later the two boys had been assigned to and shown up to Room 71 right next to Room 69.

Had they looked back on the register when they signed their names things might have turned out differently as written there for all to see was the name, Harry Henshaw.

But this did not happen and Bill Blake and Sam Perry went to bed and to sleep without knowing that the man they sought was within a few feet of them. Sometime during the night Bill Blake woke enough to know that a loud noise had occurred in Room 69 and he heard that door open and close again and the sound of feet in the corridor. He got out of bed and peered from his doorway but he had waited too long. No one was in sight and all was quiet again. He went back to bed and to sleep once more.

Next morning about 7:30 Bill Blake and Sam Perry left their room. As they did so a servant bounced out of the adjoining room with a face as white as chalk. "What's the matter," said Bill Blake. "Matter" cried the woman. "Lawks gents, there's everything the matter. There's a man dead in Room 69."

Chap. 11. Mystery in a Hotel

The servant rushed to the office to get the manager. Bill Blake and Sam Perry used as they were to the dead, thru their studies, went into Room 69 and were almost paralyzed with horror at what they saw. A young

man lay dead in the bed with his face pounded into an unrecognizable mass of pulp. The manager came to the room and soon the Captain of the Charles Street Police Station.

Bill and Sam were about to leave the Hotel when curiosity caused them to look at the register to see the name of the man who lay dead in Room 69. Imagine their grief when they saw there the name of their dearest friend, Harry Henshaw. They went back to the Room 69 and told the Captain they were afraid the body was that of their missing friend. They were allowed to examine the clothes and effects of the dead man and were forced to identify the body as that of their friend. The clothes and pocket-book were unmistakably those belonging to Harry, the face of the corpse could never be identified so smashed and broken it was. The Captain said they would have to be held pending an investigation.

"Gentlemen," said a deep voice at the door, "I called at this hotel by appointment with my cousin, Mr. Henshaw. At the office I was met by the shocking statement that in this room I would find him dead." The police Captain demanded his name and he said he was Doctor Ramage of Boston, and that he was a cousin of the deceased.

It was the dissipated stranger whose acquaintance with the Man in Black has already been related. It was the bold intruder upon the secret council of the five.

Chap. 12. In the Cemetery

Bill Blake and Sam Perry were held by the police all one day and night, then appeared at the inquest which resulted in their being no evidence found against them and they were released. Coroner gave permission for the body to be buried and Undertaker Hersey, whose shop was next to the J— House conducted the funeral. Burial was in the New York Bay Cemetery and the chief mourner was Doctor Ramage of Boston.

The body with a cloth over the disfigured face was exposed to the mourners and Bill Blake when he passed to pay his last respects thought of the strange change of colors they had seen in the shroud that had once been upon Jim McKee's body and he bent down and looked at an angle at

the shroud now on poor Harry's body and he could plainly see the scarlet color present in this instance also.

The body was put in the receiving vault in the cemetery and it was the same vault No. 23. When the ceremonies were over the other students who had attended looked for Bill Blake and Sam Perry but they were not to be found. Bill and Sam utterly determined to uncover the mystery of the "scarlet shroud" had slipped out and taken up a position behind a large square tomb from whence they could keep watch on the receiving vault. It was soon dark and grew piercingly cold. When it came to midnight the two boys had gotten almost to the limit of their endurance when all thoughts of discomfort fled when they saw a dim light approaching the receiving vault. As it came nearer they could see the light came from a shaded lantern carried by an elderly man attired entirely in black.

Chap. 13. The Man in Black Advances His Price

Bill Blake and Sam Perry at the inquest had given out the story of the mysterious movements of the Man in Black as far as they knew them and the police had orders to bring him in as soon as possible for questioning. Yet that mysterious man hid out so close to the J— House that he could keep watch on it and when Doctor Ramage the man who had announced himself as the cousin of the deceased, left that hotel about 11:30 AM he had gone only a few steps before the Man in Black stepped to his side.

Dr. Ramage was frightened that the police would be upon them any moment so they stepped into a saloon nearby and were soon talking in low tones in a private room.

The Man in Black did not "beat about the bush" but told Ramage that the "five" held the whip hand over him. They knew Ramage's true position and the promised \$10,000 would no longer be accepted as full payment. It was known that Dr. Ramage was really Dr. Henshaw of Boston and that he was one of the executors of the vast estate of the late William Henshaw who died in the Insane Asylum at Worcester, Mass. That it further was known that the insane man's lawyers had lately dis-

covered a will made by William Henshaw executed when he was still sane, in which he left his vast estate to his only son Henry Henshaw whose dead body had so lately been found in the J— House. Further the "five" knew that this will if Henry Henshaw should be dead, bequeathed this fortune to Henry's cousin, a Dr. Henshaw and the "five" knew that the instigator of the death was really this Dr. Henshaw posing as Dr. Ramage.

"So," said the Man in Black, "you are going to be a very rich man. \$100,000 is our price."

Chap. 14. Bill Blake Makes a Startling Discovery

The man with the lighted lantern continued to advance and soon Bill Blake and Sam Perry could recognize him for the Man in Black. With him were two other men, one of them carrying a large sack. With a key taken from one of their pockets the door of the receiving vault was opened and the three men passed inside.

Sam Perry suddenly clutched Bill by the arm and pointed among the graves at the other side of the path. An object garbed in white had suddenly risen from behind a tombstone and as they watched, it slowly sank out of sight. Just what effect this ghostly sight would have produced on the two young men we will never know as almost at once their attention had to be centered on a more vital occurrence.

The three men were coming out of the vault. This time the large bag the men were carrying was not empty. The Man in Black carrying the lantern led the way with the men with the bag following deeper into the cemetery and soon came to the little hut to which Harry Henshaw followed the Man in Black on the occasion of Jim McKee's funeral.

Dumping the bag and its contents on the ground the three men entered the hut and when Bill Blake peered thru the keyhole he could see the three seated around a table, smoking with a bottle and glasses between them.

Now was their chance and Bill and Sam availed themselves of it. They were determined to examine the contents of that bag. Pulling out his knife Bill severed the cord at a single stroke. They drew back the folds of the bag and exposed the corpse upon the

snowy ground. As they expected it was the body buried as Harry Henshaw.

"Which foot was it Sam, do you remember?" "The left, Harry lost his little toe from that foot when he was a little child." "Then here's for the test," breathed Bill, removing the stocking from the left foot of the corpse. "I knew it, see here Sam, the foot is perfect. This is not the body of Harry Henshaw. My theory was correct."

(A PERSONAL NOTE. Often as kids some scene or occurrence is etched on our minds so deeply it will be with us always. At this point in this novel I have such a memory. It was summer time and I had been upstreet in Springfield, Mass. and bought two novels in a second hand novel place for 2½c each. One was a *Work and Win* and one was a copy of this *Pluck and Luck* 118. With my parents I lived in the upper tenement of a two family house but I slept alone in a room in the attic. That night I took my little oil bed lamp and went up to my room. Drew out my lately acquired copy of this story and lost myself in it.

I had gotten as far in the story as I have related, when it got me. It was too much; the dark winter night, in a cemetery, pulling a stocking from the foot of a corpse. I looked up from my book and looked out the door of my bedroom into an inky black attic. I got up in haste and shut the door of my room. Now of course, I wasn't afraid but just careful about drafts. But from the way chills were running up and down my spine a draft from the Arctic must have been blowing on me for a half hour. My eyes were bulging out in imminent danger of falling into my lap. But in a moment or two my hair lay down again and I went on with my reading.

I'll never forget that occurrence as long as I live and you can bet I got a kick out of this story when I read it over to prepare this little article. END OF NOTE.)

Chap. 15. Remarkable Experience of Harry Henshaw

We know that Harry Henshaw fell into a deep sleep as soon as he lay down on the bed in Room 69 in the J— House. Sometime during the night he woke to find two men standing

by his bedside. He got from the bed but from the effect of the drug he could not remain erect and fell heavily to the floor. This was the sound that had roused Bill Blake from his sleep in the next room.

Harry lost consciousness at once and next thing he knew he was lying stretched at full length inside some moving vehicle. It was now daylight and as the vehicle jolted along its way, light would momentarily enter as the curtains at the side of the wagon parted for an instant.

At one such moment of light Harry saw enough to know he was lying in a narrow wooden box without a cover, a coffin-shaped affair used by undertakers to keep bodies on ice.

The vehicle in which he rode was one inside of which it is seldom man's fate to ride twice. It was a hearse.

Chap. 16. An Unexpected Ally

We left Bill Blake and Sam Perry standing over the nameless corpse outside the hut in the cemetery. They hastily restored the body to the sack and tied the mouth of the bag up again. Hiding themselves in the shrubbery they resolved to follow the men no matter where they went. Not long after the three men came out of the hut and picking up the sack carried it to where a gate opened out of the cemetery wall. One of the men opened this gate with a key and two of the men carried the body thru. The one who had opened the gate with the key remained behind in the cemetery and closed and locked the gate after them.

Bill and Sam soon scrambled over the cemetery wall. Here the cemetery wall skirts the line of the Central Railroad of New Jersey which the highway crosses by means of a viaduct. The boys went down the bank and hid under the viaduct from which they had a view of the road as it wound across the meadow. They saw the Man in Black and his companion carrying the sack a ways down this road, then turn aside to a creek that ran there and saw them put the sack in a boat.

Bill said probably there was no chance of following the Man in Black any further but they would make their way to the creek and see if by chance there was another boat there.

A sound was heard above them as if some one were getting over the

cemetery wall and they heard the crunch of the snow as the man jumped down but when the two boys retraced their steps to the top of the railroad embankment they saw no one.

From there the boys could see the Man in Black rowing his boat down the creek in the direction of the Bay. Hurrying across the viaduct the two boys went to the side of the creek but no amount of searching found for them another boat.

Suddenly a voice behind them said, "Good evening, gentlemen." The startled boys beheld a roughly dressed stranger smoking a big cigar. This man said, "For a couple of boys you have done mighty well with your midnight work so far, if you want to continue it, why Bramwell, the detective, is your man."

Chap. 17. Further Adventures of Harry Henshaw

Riding inside a hearse, it was a ghastly situation for Harry Henshaw. Harry could think of no reason for his present predicament, he had no enemies that he knew of. Had always been on friendly terms with his cousin Dr. Henshaw and of the death of his father and of the finding of the will Harry knew nothing as yet.

Presently the team turned from the city street they had been on, passed for some time over a country road, at last it came to a stop. The door of the hearse was pulled open and the box pulled out. Harry caught sight of one face he knew well, that of Mr. Hersey the undertaker who had his shop at the corner of the street in which Harry Henshaw had a room in a boarding house. The box with Harry in it was carried into a house and upstairs, Harry was lifted out and laid on a bed but he knew no more, he had lost consciousness.

When Harry again regained his senses he had no idea of how long a time had elapsed, it might have been an hour it might have been a week. He looked about him and seated in an old chair near a dying fire in the fireplace was a man, a misshapen dwarf, who was fast asleep. Harry arose shaking from weakness.

He could find no clothes to put on but attired as he was only in his underwear he resolved to try to escape. He first tried the door; it was locked. Next he tried the windows, they were

heavily barred and outside were heavy wooden shutters thru which no glimmer of light came. It might be noon, it might be midnight. Harry had no idea.

As he walked around the room he became aware of a dull, sickly odor in the air and being a medical student he instantly recognized this smell. It was the odor of partially embalmed corpses prepared for the dissecting knife.

The ugly hunchback continued to sleep on and Harry going over toward him noticed sticking out of his pocket a huge bunch of keys. With the utmost care he succeeded in possessing this bunch of keys without arousing the sleeping hunchback.

As silently as possible Harry opened the door and instead of being in a corridor as he hoped he passed into another room similar to that in which he had been imprisoned. The sickly odor was much increased in there and no wonder. On a table Harry saw the bodies of three men lying with their faces exposed. Harry was in the presence of death.

Chap. 18. Bramwell, the Detective— What He Knew and What He Did

Bramwell told Bill Blake and Sam Perry that he had been watching in the cemetery at the time of the funeral and that he was the man who with a sheet over his head had made such a ghostly appearance and disappearance behind the tombstone. Bramwell told the boys he had a boat concealed in the bushes lining the creek and if they were game they would at once follow the now distant boat which held the Man in Black and the dead body which had been buried as Harry Henshaw.

Bramwell said the body was one secured from The Morgue and an attendant there was already under arrest for his part in the body-snatching crimes. The "Brothers of the Five" were believed to have agents working in almost every cemetery in the vicinity.

Bramwell and the boys entered the boat and they started in pursuit. The hard exercise of rowing was no hardship as without it they would have almost frozen as it was bitter cold on the water. After a long pursuit it appeared as tho their quarry were headed for shore somewhere below Greenwood Cemetery on the Bay

Ridge shore. With care not to appear to be following, the boys and Bramwell kept their boat going in the same general direction.

Finally the Man in Black headed directly in toward shore. Our friends then headed toward Fort Hamilton and after their quarry's boat had disappeared into a little cove Bramwell turned the boat and they too soon were in this same cove. About fifteen minutes later our friends drew up to the shore beside the now empty boat that they had been pursuing. Its queer freight was now gone.

Close beside the cove stood an old ruined mansion, partly built on a small bluff and partly on piles which stood in the water. It was tilted so far over on one side it was a wonder that it was able to remain standing at all. Not a glimmer of light showed anywhere and not a sound was heard but footprints led from the cove to a little porch on one side of the house. "Boys," breathed the detective, "We have tracked the Five to their secret den."

Chap. 19. Harry Henshaw Learns the Truth

Harry tried the door from that room which he thought would lead to the corridor but none of the keys in the bunch he had taken from the hunchback would fit so he quietly returned to the room where he had been held captive. The dwarf still slept soundly on. To his delight Harry now discovered his clothes which he lost no time in putting on.

Then he tried the key in the 2nd door of this room and to his delight he was able to open it, stepped thru the doorway and relocked the door again.

The sounds of voices now came up the stairs quite plainly and the speakers were the "Brothers of the Five" and Dr. Henshaw of Boston who had come prepared to accept the demands of the gang for the larger amount of money as demanded by the Man in Black. As they talk the matter over, the reason for their attacks on him were made plain to Harry. He learned of the death of his father and of the villainy of his cousin Ed Henshaw.

Harry silently descended the stairs but alas, none of his keys would fit the front door, nor was his success any greater when he tried to open

the side door. He leaned against the wall and tried to think what he should do. Harry heard a slight noise behind him and turning saw there the Man in Black.

Chap. 20. A Cry in the Night

Bill Blake and Sam Perry regarded the old house curiously. It faced a lane over half a mile long which led down to the waterside from Third Ave., the principal street of Bay Ridge. The two boys followed Bramwell the detective as he made an examination of the side and front of the house which could be reached on dry land. But they could find no place where they could enter without breaking their way in which would have put the gang in possession of the knowledge that enemies were after them, knowledge which Bramwell wished to keep from them as long as possible.

Bramwell suggested they get in their boat again and explore that part of the old building that jutted out over the bay built on the piles. The boys as well as the detective felt sure that this old mansion was the secret den of the "Five" and that Harry Henshaw was even then held a prisoner somewhere in that house.

They rowed their boat under that part of the house and the detective's dark lantern showed a floor of rotten timbers above them and the piles around them seemed to be slowly sinking down in the mud. A trampling of many feet occurred in the room above their heads and then came a loud cracking sound as if the timbers were giving away. In fear the boys hastily rowed their boat out from in under the house. A cry from inside the house was heard—a cry for help and it seemed to be Harry's voice.

Chap. 21. The Fate of the Five— The End

The Man in Black whispered, "Harry Henshaw, I command you to go back to the room upstairs if you place the slightest value on your life." But just at the moment there came an unexpected interruption. A loud pounding on a door upstairs and a loud shouting, it was the hunchback who had awakened at last and was trying to get out of the room inside of which Harry Henshaw had locked him.

The Man in Black tried to push Harry toward the door leading to the porch as, scoundrel as he was, it lay

in the heart of the Man in Black to have saved Harry if he could. But Harry could not believe any such thing and he attacked the Man in Black as fiercely as he could. But in his weakened condition the outcome was quickly decided and by the time the "Five" had run in from the other room Harry was stretched out on the floor helpless.

Dr. Henshaw shouted that they had played him false, that the boy was alive. The Man in Black told him that indeed they had played him false. He said that the "Five" robbed graves it was true but that they never had committed murder and in this particular case had never intended to commit murder but intended to get Dr. Henshaw's money by faking the appearance of murder.

However tho the "Five" would not commit murder if Dr. Henshaw would turn over to them the note for \$100,000 right now they would allow him to take Harry Henshaw up to the room where the three dead bodies already lay and there Dr. Henshaw could do as he saw fit. Dr. Henshaw said, "You think I am fool enough to give you \$100,000 and then do all the dirty work myself." He was told the alternative was that they would make him a prisoner and set Harry Henshaw free.

Dr. Henshaw was forced to agree and with the hunchback to aid him carried Harry up the stairs, carried him into the room and laid him on the table alongside the corpses already laid out there. The gag had come out of Harry's mouth and he screamed repeatedly and begged his unnatural cousin for mercy.

Right here the hand of Providence intervened. There came a low rumbling sound followed by a thunderous crash and the partition of the room suddenly disappeared and the whole portion of the old mansion that jutted out over the bay sank into the icy waters of the bay. In that portion had been seated all the members of the "Brotherhood of Five." "What good luck" said Dr. Henshaw; "all the witnesses but this hunchback gone," and he raised the knife to sink it in Harry's breast.

"Stop where you are," shouted a voice, and Bramwell, the detective, stepped into the room with a revolver leveled at Dr. Henshaw's heart.

. . .

The trials of Harry Henshaw were over at last. The handcuffing of the villainous Dr. Henshaw was easily accomplished. The hunchback escaped during the confusion and was never seen again. The "Five" perished to a man. The bodies of Hersey, the undertaker, of Gordon, the curator of Sanford Medical College and of August Zenckendorf, the German saloon-keeper, were washed ashore at Bath Beach the day after the accident. Six weeks later the body of Spicer, the undertaker of Avenue B, came ashore at Coney Island. The body of the Man in Black was never found. Such was the fate of the "Five."

Officials of several cemeteries and of attendants at The Morgue were tried but not a single conviction was obtained, everyone knew they were guilty but real proof was completely absent. In the trial of Dr. Henshaw again full justice did not seem to be done. The only charge that Bramwell, the detective, could bring against him was, assault with intent to kill.

Shortly after the trials were over Harry Henshaw came into the large fortune left him by his father. He completed his medical studies notwithstanding his great change in fortune. He remained friends for life with Jim McKee, Bill Blake and Sam Perry. The medical colleges received a severe lesson as a result of the publicity this affair received, much more care is taken as to the method used in obtaining subjects for dissection. There has been a radical change in these matters since the days of the SCARLET SHROUD.

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